IMMORTAL DOUBTS: BIOGRAPHICAL AND AFFECTIVE DIMENSIONS OF MORTALITY IN EMILY DICKINSON'S POETRY

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ABSTRACT

One of the most enigmatic figures in American Literature, Emily Dickinson is renowned for her engagement with death that dominates much of her poetry. This study explores this recurring theme in two of her poems, "One dignity delays for all" and "Twas just this time, last year, I died," through employing a combined approach of biographical criticism and affect theory to elucidate her personal experiences of loss, religious tension, and seclusion that are instrumental in shaping her representations of mortality. Laying the foundation for the interpretation of the selected poems, Dickinson's biographical background and historical context elucidate that her strict Calvinist upbringing, as well as the repeated bereavements caused by the loss of people she knows, along with a repressive patriarchal structure surrounding her, triggered an ambivalent fascination both with death and the afterlife. In "One dignity delays for all," Dickinson portrays death as an egalitarian "dignity," framed by regal imagery such as purple robes and crowns, an unavoidable experience yet marked by ironic distance, embodying her skeptical attitude towards religious dogma and her use of psychological defence mechanisms, such as denial and intellectualization, in response to grief. Contrary to this, "Twas just this time, last year, I died" situates a posthumous first-person voice that retains emotional and sensory consciousness, affirming the immortality of the soul, albeit in isolation and societal restrictions. The affective reading of these poems highlights Dickinson's ability to transform personal turmoil into a softer form through poetic expression, revealing subtle affective shifts among contrasting emotions. Drawing on a comparative analysis of two poems, this study reveals the interaction between the personal experiences of Dickinson and her emotional treatment of death, foregrounding contrasts that are evident in tone, perspective and theme as can be traced in the emphasis of universal mortality in "One dignity delays for all," reflecting detached ironic diction whilst "Twas just this time, last year, I died" presents intimate introspection accompanied by posthumous awareness. Through a close reading employing an integrated biographical and affective lens, this study illustrates how personal and cultural pressures are negotiated in Dickinson's poetry, offering a distinction between death as lived experience and as lyrical exploration.

Keywords: Biographical Criticism, Affect Theory, Posthumous Consciousness

ÖZET

Amerikan edebiyatının en esrarengiz figürlerinden biri olan Emily Dickinson, şiirlerinin çoğunda hakim olan ölüm temasıyla tanınır. Bu çalışma, Dickinson'ın şiirlerinde tekrar eden bu temayı, "One dignity delays for all" ve "Twas just this time, last year, I died" adlı iki şiirinde, biyografik eleştiri ve duygulanım teorisini birleştiren bir yaklaşımla ele alarak Dickinson'ın kişisel kayıp deneyimleri, dini gerilimleri ve inzivaya çekilmesinin ölüme dair tasvirlerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Seçilen şiirlerin yorumlanmasının temelini oluşturan Dickinson'ın biyografik geçmişi ve tarihsel bağlamı,

onun katı Kalvinist yetiştirilme tarzının, tanıdığı kişilerin kaybıyla ilgili tekrarlanan yasların ve onu çevreleyen baskıcı ataerkil yapının, hem ölüm hem de öbür dünya ile ilgili çelişkili duygular geliştirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. “One dignity delays for all” satırıyla başlayan şiirinde Dickinson, ölümü mor cüppeler ve taçlar gibi asil imgelerle çerçevelenen, kaçınılmaz bir deneyim olarak tanımlar ama yine de ironik bir tutumla ele alır ve eşitlikçi bir “itibar” olarak tasvir eder. Bu, onun dini dogmalara karşı şüpheci tutumunu ve keder karşısında inkâr ve entelektüelleştirme gibi psikolojik savunma mekanizmalarını kullandığını gözler önüne serer. Buna karşın, “Twas just this time, last year, I died” şiirinde, ölümden sonra da duygusal ve duyusal bilinci koruyan bir birinci şahıs anlatıcı yer alır ve izolasyon ve toplumsal kısıtlamalara rağmen ruhun ölümsüzlüğü ön plana çıkar. Bu şiirlerin duygusal okunumu, Dickinson'ın kişisel çalkantıları şiirsel ifade yoluyla daha yumuşak bir biçime dönüştürme yeteneğini vurgular ve zıt duygular arasındaki ince duygusal değişimleri ortaya çıkarır. İki şiirin karşılaştırmalı analizinden yola çıkan bu çalışma, Dickinson'ın kişisel deneyimleri ile ölüm konusundaki duygusal yaklaşımı arasındaki etkileşimi ortaya koyarak, “One dignity delays for all” şiirinde evrensel ölümlülüğün vurgulanmasında görülen ton, bakış açısı ve tema açısından belirgin olan zıtlıkları ön plana çıkarırken, “Twas just this time, last year, I died” şiirinde ise ölüm sonrası farkındalığın eşlik ettiği samimi bir iç gözlem sunar. Biyografik ve duygusal bir bakış açısını birleştiren yakın metin analizi yoluyla, bu çalışma Dickinson'ın şiirlerinde kişisel ve kültürel baskıların nasıl ele alındığını göstererek, yaşanmış deneyim olarak ölüm ile lirik bir keşif olarak ölüm arasında bir ayrım yapmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Biyografik Eleştiri, Duygulanım Teorisi, Ölüm Sonrası Bilinç

INTRODUCTION

“One must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star.”

Nietzsche

One of the landmarks of American Literature, Emily Dickinson was a prolific poet who wrote a great number of poems largely centered on the theme of death. This persistent preoccupation has aroused critical curiosity and scholarly inquiry, prompting readers and scholars alike to investigate the reasons lying behind what led her to revolve around and be bound up with death excessively. There are numerous ways to shed light on the reasons for her preference but the theme of death particularly directs us to dig out her biography to reveal whether it is mere coincidence or a preference more than an arbitrary one. Accordingly, this study analyzes two of her poems, “One dignity delays for all” and“'Twas just this time, last year, I died” through a biographical approach combined with an affective lens to illuminate her treatment of death.

This biographical and affective engagement with death, however, extends beyond thematic content and manifests itself in Dickinson’s radical reconfiguration of poetic language and authority. As noted by Howe (1985), along with Gertrude Stein, Emily Dickinson is identified as one of the “most innovative precursors of modernist poetry and prose.” She problematized the patriarchal authority prevailing in literary history (11). She viewed the language of the heart beyond a logical syntax and believed that it has quite another grammar (13). Although Emily Dickinson’s poetry has been extensively studied from various perspectives, the intersection of biographical criticism and affect theory provides an aspect rarely applied in the analysis of her representation of death. Biographical criticism elucidates Dickinson’s life experiences which set affective contexts that shape her poetic imagination while affect theory provides a critical framework to examine Dickinson’s emotional immediacy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Of great cruciality is background story of authors and poets as it is estimated that what they have experienced is reflected on what they write, that's why one of the principal aspects to develop a critical view on a literary work is biographical criticism which regards biography as a prerequisite in evaluation of any literary products (Benson, 1989: 107-108). Developed by Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, biographical criticism aims scientifically "to contextualize the creative work" of either a poet or an author (Habib, 2005: 423). Although it is one of the traditional theories based on "the author's intentions or aesthetics in the most general sense" limiting the study of poetry to "opinion or fancy" and disregarding "technical and rhetorical accomplishments" (Castle, 2007: 122), biographical criticism seems to provide a sound perspective from which Emily's poetry, perhaps an outcome of the chaos she was in, can be elaborated by her readers or biographers. In order to hold a painstaking study, close readings of two poems are to be carried out with references to her biography and affective dimensions of death.

Although no memoir or no diary is available to base her biography on, a great number of letters form the basis of information biographers provide for readers in order to broaden their perspectives towards Dickinson's poetry, yet, there is a gap in her biography which causes obscurity. It is undeniable that what leads her to be the "poet recluse" is also what causes her biography to remain mysterious (Leiter, 2007: 3). "Truth is such a rare thing it is delightful to tell it" says Dickinson implicitly giving a clue why truths regarding her life were mysterious (Koss, n.d.: 7). Akin to most of the poets and authors, Emily's works were published posthumously as she did not want them to be published and only shared few of them with her close friends. As a poet of "seclusion and solitariness", Emily Dickinson restricted herself to her own world and adopted her own way in accordance with her choices peculiar to her (Roy and Mahavidyalaya, 2015: 166) This is apparently what differentiates her from others and contributes to her enigmatic entity.

As representational forms, both literature and art are instrumental in reflecting an already mediated reality, rooted in particular events, practices and histories, and they simultaneously maintain constructed and distorted versions that cannot replace the real or attain the status of it (Ariza, 2020: 3). In *The Autonomy of Affect*, Massumi (1995) underscores that an image's emotional impact does not resonate with its conventional meaning directly. Although an image's content is formed by common social and linguistic frameworks, defining what it signifies, its intensity, namely the duration and force of its effect functions differently. The meaning of an image differs remarkably from the degree of its affect on viewers, so images reflecting similar meanings can trigger different emotional responses and likewise, powerful effects can be induced by seemingly simple content. This is not the denial of the relationship between meaning and effect at all but embodiment of that the relationship cannot be reduced to a linear or logically predictable frame. Succinctly, there is an undeniable gap between the qualitative meaning of an image and the intensity of its affect, which can be elaborated on different principles:

> "Accepting and expanding upon that, it could be noted that the primacy of the affective is marked by a gap between content and effect: it would appear that the strength or duration of an image's effect is not logically connected to the content in any straightforward way. This is not to say that there is no connection and no logic. What is meant here by the content of the image is its indexing to conventional meanings in an intersubjective context, its socio-linguistic qualification. This indexing fixes the quality of the image; the strength or duration of the image's effect could be

> called its intensity. What comes out here is that there is no correspondence or conformity between quality and intensity. If there is a relation, it is of another nature" (Massumi, 1995, 84-85).

Blehner (2019) foregrounds that engaging with literature results in intensity and reconfiguration, thereby embodying its affective component. Additionally, through vicarious experiences, literature provide people with experiences of vicarious affects (6). Massumi highlights the autonomy of affect as follows:

> "Affects are virtual synesthetic perspectives anchored in (functionally limited by) the actually existing, particular things that embody them. The autonomy of affect is its participation in the virtual. lts autonomy is its openless. Affect is autonomous to the degree to which it escapes confinement in the particular body whose vitality, or potential for interaction, it is. Formed, qualified, situated perceptions and cognitions fulfilling functions of actual connection or blockage are the capture and closure of affect. Emotion is the most intense (most contracted) expression of that capture-and of the fact that something has always and again escaped. Something remains unactualized, inseparable from but unassimilable to any particular, functionally anchored perspective. That is why all emotion is more or less disorienting, and why it is classically described as being outside of oneself, at the very point at which one is most intimately and unshareably in contact with oneself and one's vitality. If there were no escape, no excess or remainder, no fade-out to infinity, the universe would be without potential, pure entropy, death. Actually existing, structured things live in and through that which escapes them. Their autonomy is the autonomy of affect" (Massumi, 2002: 35).

Affect theory posits literary texts beyond their simple representation of emotions as stable states and treats them as a space that register pre-cognitive, bodily and relational forces that operate beyond articulated feelings as noted by Massumi (2002). In Emily Dickinson's poetry, death cannot be reduced merely to a thematic concern since it operates as an affective field where irony, restraint, anticipation, and isolation are shaped. Both of the selected poems portray death as an event that reorganizes affect rather than resolving it.

BETWEEN EXPERIENCE AND EXPRESSION: DEATH IN DICKINSON'S POETRY

In "One Dignity Delays for All," Dickinson presents death as a universal experience and depicts an impersonal stance, portraying it through ceremonial and regal imagery that consolidate a flattened affective tone, characterized by emotional restraint and ironic distance. She does not make mention of grief or consolation so the poem situates death as an abstract concept translating it into symbolic order. The cultural form that qualify affect as intensity manifests through channeling death into formality and universality. Prior to the conversion into emotion, what is sparking in "One Dignity Delays for All" is "inevitability" and "awe," and "delays" subtly refers to a suspended intensity and reflects a point where the ordinary flow of life interrupts. This affect is no bound by personal narrative yet it features "autonomy," outside any social reconfigurations so the raw capacity of death as an autonomous concept appears to "affect" all bodies equally without discrimination drawing on identity, thus forming a collective, pre-social intensity. This intensity is contributed to through the use of words like "purple" or "crown" that can be construed as connotation of nobility.

Essig (1964) articulates this in his study of Dickinson's poem by raising a question on how "our meek escutcheon" can refer to a tombstone and interprets this as a sort of claim check

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through which a man is entitled with the rank or status. He elucidates what it means on the basis of the context and within a rational framework, he underscores mortality as follows:

> "it could very well be man's mortality, his essential humanity, which is the only condition for his admission to the rank in question. No other credentials are necessary. Man's mortal nature alone entitles him to the "dignity" or honor accorded at death" (29).

The affective Dynamics of inevitability and detachment find formal expression in the following stanza:

> One dignity delays for all—
> One mitred Afternoon—
> None can avoid this purple—
> None evade this Crown! (Dickinson, 1924: 181).

In "One dignity delays for all", Emily does not make a mention of death verbally till the last line ("And claim the rank to die!") and embarks on her poem with lines which subtly refer to death by emphasizing its dignity and inevitability. As a whole, in the poem, abstraction and intellectualization replace emotional response, embodying a regulation of feeling. In contrary to cliche-ridden expressions regarding the concept of death, the very beginning of the poem reflects an ironic and impersonal attitude towards death also signalling the attitude predominant in the rest of the poem; furthermore, details involved in this stanza such as naming death as "purple" which is a symbol of royalty seem to contribute to this attitude. In a biographical sketch, this detachment can be based on the "denial", one of the terms categorized as a defense type by Freud (Tyson, 2006: 15), as death is not regarded as something personal but as if a concept not concerned with any personal experience contrary to the stereotype concerning the notion of death. Equally, this denial can be asserted to stem from the fear of abandonment nourished by the grief which appeared following Emily's loss of her father, mother and close friends at a young age that strengthens the likeliness of her to develop defense mechanism either to avoid anguish, agony or repress these feelings somehow. Defense mechnanism is a way people employ to ward off emotional experiences which has negative influences on them (Horowitz et al., 1992: 324) and in Emily's poetry, the speaker's attitude towards death can be based on defense mechanism Emily developed in her own life following loss of her beloved ones. The reasons which triggered Emily to write can not be isolated from the period she lived in and like Whitman and Melville, she wrote as a "reaction to evermounting assaults-scientific, philosophical, historical, political" aspects and she interrogated "Chrisitian understandings of the origins and purpose of human existence", succintly "threatened belief" led her to write (Spengemann, 2010: xiii). She underwent religious crisis and this is depicted in her poetry. For instance, the words "Afternoon" and "Crown" as capitalized in the first stanza of the poem can be viewed as a reference to the belief of Emily in reincarnation. Her ancestors started a new life through which they aimed for evading the Church of England defined as "corrupted" and having the freedom to practise religion, a purified Calvinist one (Leiter, 2007: 3-4). On the other hand, Emily rebelled against conversion and joining the church although she felt regretful about it after a while as far as can be deduced from her utterances which defined it a golden opportunity to become a Christian (Leiter, 2007: 8). When the historical background is taken into consideration, it appears that Emily lived in a period when controversial issues were overwhelming. After the United States of America declared its independence in 1776, it also gave birth to an environment full of turmoils. As a reflection of this, in Emily's poetry, "an emanation of liberal independent soul" who fights against the religious dogmas and restrictions imposed by

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Calvinism is employed (Daghamin, 2017: 149) and most likely, Emily wrote from a perspective critisizing even the religious issues without feeling the pressure that was potential to curb her. Another point to be mentioned here is that Emily's rebellion against religion can be a result of her relationship with her parents who obeyed the dogmatic rules of the church and preferred to live accordingly. Her agression towards them may have turned into "a displacement" as a defense mechanism (Baumeister, 1998: 1093) and appeared as a revolt against religion which deeply influenced her to write based on the themes relevant to religion. She believed the immortality of soul so in this aspect, noon can be a turning point symbolically standing for transmission from one person to another and afternoon can be a metaphorical usage for the life a soul will keep living in next and "Crown" may stand for the new body of the soul. Alike to the enthronements held in Ottoman Empire, funeral may stand for a ceremony held for transmission of the soul to another body. Since Emily Dickinson rejected the dogmas imposed by the church, the tone in the poem can be defined as a sarcastic one because in the Orthodox Christianity, "willingness to die" is thought to mean that God elected that person. Emily did not want to regard death as an "election" for eminent people and have the belief of the "Grace of the God" (Lindberg, 2008: 270), so, as a result of this disbelief, she wrote cynically and also critically with an emphasis on the view that death is for everyone as denoted in the third line: "None can avoid this purple." In the second stanza, the utterances relevant to the setting are involved and akin to the first stanza, far from the grief felt owing to the death, the funeral is described as if it were a celebration or a kind of ceremony that may be also a consequence of self-defense mechanism developed against death and attempt for repression or it is also likely that a person's death does not mean its soul is also dead in accordance with Emily's own belief, hence funeral may be criticized in a cynical tone since giving that much importance to a dead body is considered to be irrational. In the third stanza, with the first line in which Attendants capitalized, the cynical tone can be asserted to continue perhaps implying the attendants will not live in the world perpetually or may also a sarcastic usage implying that they were not elected by the God as believed in the Orthodox Christianity. In the last stanza, emphasis is on the democratic side of the death as explicitly reflected with the usage of pronouns "I" and "you" regardless of "ermine" or "meek escutheon." In the biographical aspect, this can be explained on the basis of the period Emily dwelled in when remarkable movements like abolitionism and concepts such as democracy, independence, self-value were triggered by the idea that equal rights should be available for all human-beings. The comparison between the "pomp surpassing ermine" and "meek escutheon" is made especially to emphasize every person will experience death regardless their position or prosperity as also prescribed in religious sources. Following the enlightenment, awareness raised on social and religional settings in different parts of Europe and the USA. Freedom from religional instutions appeared as one of the radical movements adopted by some groups. Benjamin Franklin Newton, an important figure in Emily's life, raised her awareness regarding "what was most grand and beautiful in nature, and that sublimer lesson, a faith in things unseen. Adopted by Newton, Unitarianism emphasized the "life's inherent dignity and the power of the sovereign mind's ability to transcend nature" which provided Emily with a vision of immortality that was more congenial than the perception of Calvinists who had an idea of eternity decided on by a "wrathful God" (Leiter, 2007: 9). Emily's interrogation of death opened a way for her to develop her views concerning profound issues such as "religion, God, nature" and this can be the basic reason for her stance like a revolt against the traditional ideas or beliefs (Daghamin, 2017: 148). On the basis of this, the last stanza may be an effort to externalize death and a counterview against the belief that the elected people were endowed with death by the God like a gift and contrary to this belief, emphasis is put on that death can not be peculiar to the elected people but it is for everyone.

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Contrary to the former poem, the concept of death is articulated through a posthumous first-person voice, forming a markedly different affective register in "'Twas just this time, last year, I died:"

> 'Twas just this time, last year, I died.
> I know I heard the Corn,
> When I was carried by the Farms —
> It had the Tassels on — (Dickinson, 1924: 252).

The voice views death from the perspective of an experienced figure, thus portraying a personal experience. Affect is created through lingering consciousness as evident in the lines depicting awareness, memory and emotional sensivity in the aftermath of death. This "first person" speaker tells his/her death giving details about setting, his/her feelings and also how life would be if s/he were alive, etc. Although no clue relevant to the gender of the speaker is available in the poet, as it was penned by Emily and as her obsession with the theme of death is well-known, it would not be wrong to think the speaker is a female. In Emily's poetry, death is described in various forms and the "facts of dying, the dead people in their graves and in their heaven" principally form the content of her poetry. Involving her thoughts and emotions, she seems to strive for "a sublimation of grief and an annihilation of her sense of loss." Aware of the physcial reality of dying, in her poems, she gives a great number of descriptions relevant to death, dead bodies or ways of dying (Lindberg, 2008: 273). "'Twas just this time, last year I died" exemplifies Emily's perception of death with the consciousness which can perform as live people do which can be based on the belief Emily has in immortality of the soul. In the first stanza, the "dead person" speaks and narrates his/her death which can be explained on the basis of Emily's belief that soul is immortal and consciousness continues after death even making it possible to tell about his/her death. The speaker tells that she could hear the corn implying that environment is in tranquility. This may be a reflection of Emily's own seclusion in her real life far from the society, and as she felt isolated in her won life, she could not imagine a different environment in her funeral, otherwise, she could write that not the corn but she heard her best friend (Sue). In the second stanza, the dead person could think which necessitates consciousness again that is extraordinary, yet religious aspect of Emily sheds light on this issue. In this stanza, the speaker tells that s/he wanted to go out but something hindered her/him. This may be a metaphoric usage and what held his/her will may be the dominant attitude of patriarchial society she was born into but as the poem is told by a dead person, something which held his/her will may be also his/her dead body. Throughout the poem, it is obvious that there are some details regarding the outside world which are clearly described which is not expected from a "poet" who rarely preferred to leave in the house. This can be explained on the fact that after Bible, Emily was accompanied by a great number of books that enriched her imagination and intellectual capacity (Leiter, 2007: 9). In the third stanza, details inform the readers of the setting and help them to imagine in their mind the season and the setting when his/her corpse was carried. Describing the environment through apples, pumpkins, fields may be explained on the basis of her passion for botany during her childhood and nature as an influence of Transcendentalists which prioritized the natural elements in their literary work. In the following stanza, namely the fourth one, an emotional tone is predominant reflecting the speaker's perspective towards the life after his/her death. Emily's father was not pleased with her "flamboyant literary debut" as he asserted that women should be far away from "the public spotlight" (Leiter, 2007: 10). Described as a "gloomy, repressive, patriarchal figure", he influenced her and added anguish to her "blighted childhood" (Leiter, 2007: 4), therefore the lines "If Father'd multiply the plates-To make an even Sum-" can be evaluated as a reflection of the relationship between her and her father that was devoid of intimacy and also the secondary position of women in a

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patriarchal society where women were exposed to inequality. Also even if s/he is dead, she wonders whether lack of him/her is felt and whether s/he is missed. This stanza reflects depression of the speaker that can be based on the poet's own depressive mode overwhelming in her real life as the speaker in the poem utters "..miss me least" which reflects she is certain that she can not be missed much, signalling why Emily prefered to live in seclusion. Involving the expressions like "Christmas glee", "Santa Claus" can be interpreted as a reflection of Emily Dickinson's perception that joy in life can not be replaced with the agony of it nourished by the religious dogmatic concepts or belief in a wrathful God who is thought to punish them in accordance with the system of religion adopted then. In the last stanza, what is apparent that the speaker turns into a positive mood to some extent as s/he seems to wait for some perfect year most probably s/he thinks they will be together and reunion will be realized. This stanza can be evaluated in a biographical sense that Emily's loss of her beloved ones and the agony she was exposed to following their death will not last eternally. In the last line of this stanza, spelling mistake in the reflective pronoun "themself" can be based on the biographical reality of Emily who was kept mostly at home by her parents in case she could get sick at school (Leiter, 2007: 7).

CONCLUSION

When a comparative perspective is adopted, two poems appear to differ from each other in terms of many aspects even the theme of death is common, yet as this study is dependent on the biographical criticism and affective lens, what similarities or differences are available concerning Emily's background, the social and historical context she was in are primary along with affective dimension. A comparative reading demonstrate how different affective strategies are employed by Dickinson to engage with death. In "One dignity delays for all," Emily's rejection of the idea adopted in Orthodox Christianity that is "willingness to die" is a signal of God's elect and her emphasis on that death is not a privilege but an experience everyone will have, regardless of the status, or prosperity can be evaluated as a reflection of the social context she was in following the enlightenment and independence of the USA. Independence from the religional institutes or reverends following enlightenment occupied a crucial position in people's lives then and also in Emily's as can be understood from her cynical utterances which can be defined as pejorative. Death is portrayed as a collective abstraction and through irony and formality, hence, emotional exposure is minimized. As an externalized concept in this poem, death is treated from an impersonal aspect. On the other hand,"'Twas just this time, last year I died" portrays the internalization of death, allowing affect to operate in the form of consciousness, memory, and isolation. In the poem, not a cynical tone is employed but a tone reflecting both depression and also hope that can be explained on the basis of Emily's temperament in her life in which she preferred to emphasize the joyness in life despite all anguish she was exposed to. The speaker narrates posthumous experience giving details about the setting, her/ his emotions reflecting Emily's perception of death as a metaphysical notion after which consciousness maintains its existence signalling again her belief in the immortality of the soul. In "One dignity delays for all", the speaker tells about the death in a general sense, as a common speaker amidst throng while in "'Twas just this time, last year, I died", death is personalized and narrated from a narrow perspective individually. "One dignity delays for all" tells the perception of all as denoted in the first line but in "'Twas just this time, last year, I died" a personal experience of death and afterdeath is involved in addition to the personal feelings, in this sense, two poems also differentiate in terms of their mood, the cynical one is devoid of emotional aspects while the case in"'Twas just this time.." is vice versa, hence it can be evaluated as a reflection of Emily Dickinson's mood, sometimes pretty emotional, sometimes secluded, far from the emotions quite judgmental. Generally speaking, both poems depict similarities in terms of including

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biographical facts of Emily Dickinson even if they differ from each other in the tone, mood, personal reflections. As exemplified in the analysis of the stanzas, Emily's biography exerts a profound influence on what she penned and the theme she mostly revolved around. From an affective perspective, Dickinson appears to be engaged with the modulation of emotional intensity. In "One dignity delays for all," affect is restrained and regulated through abstraction and irony, whilst in "'Twas just this time, last year I died," affect operates through consciousness and memory, sustaining personal emotional experience unlike the impersonal and externalized portrayal in the former poem, highlighting Dickinson's skill in shaping readers' emotional engagement with death.

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